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LUMBERMEN AND FORESTERS CHRISTEN TREE PONDEROSA PINE

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"We christen thee Ponderosa Pine". So spoke recently the nomenclature committee of the U. S. Forest Service to the most important member of the pine family in the United States, which has long been known in scientific parlance as Pinus ponderosa. This christening, performed without ceremony or the breaking of bottles, following similar action last fall by the directors of the Western Pine Association, ends a long period of confusion in the usage of a common name for this tree. By the Forest Service it has always been called western yellow pine. But the name "yellow" was not acceptable to the lumbermen who manufactured it, because it caused confusion with the pines of the south Atlantic and Gulf States that were spoken of collectively as "yellow pine". So the lumbermen variously called it western white pine, California white pine, Arizona white pine, bull pine, Oregon pine, western pine, or such local trade names as Deschutes white pine, Baker white pine, and recently the coined name of pondosa pine. Last year the Federal Trade Commission after exhaustive hearings ordered the producers of Pinus ponderosa lumber to desist from using the term "white", because of the conflict with the true white pines (like the Idaho white pine, sugar pine, and northern white pine). Now foresters and lumbermen have gotten together on a name taken directly from the well-established Latin name, which can cause no confusion, is distinctive, and not too hard to say and spell.

There are in the world about seventy different species of pine, and in the United States, thirty-seven. These are divided botanically into two major groups, white (or soft) pines, and yellow (or hard or pitch) pines. The former group, except for the nut pines, has five needles in a cluster, the latter mostly two or three needles in a cluster. The "white pines" generally have a softer, finer textured and lighter wood than the "yellow pines", but the wood of some of the "yellow pines" is almost indistinguishable from the wood of some of the "white pines". Ponderosa pine has three needles in a cluster, cones as large as tennis balls, and forms rather open forests of yellow-barked trees up to three or four feet in diameter. It is the prevailing forest tree of the lower elevations in central Oregon and in the Blue Mountains. It grows naturally from British Columbia to Mexico, and from South Dakota to the Pacific, and is the principal commercial tree of eastern Oregon, eastern Washington, California, the Southwest, and several of the Rocky Mountain States. The remaining stand in Washington is estimated to be 16 billion board feet and in Oregon 85 billion board feet.

Hereafter it will not masquerade under the confusing names, nicknames and trade names under which it was first introduced to society, but will be universally called, admired and sought as <u>ponderosa pine</u>.